

## **Western Kentucky Industrial Training Center Makes Debut Amid Local, State and Federal Audience**

After two years of planning, a collaborative effort between industry, government and education entities has paid off by way of producing the Western Kentucky Industrial Training Program (WKITP) and Training Center.

Commissioner Laura Owens, Department for Workforce Investment, Kentucky Education Cabinet, marked the event with an opening ceremony and a check presentation on October 21, 2004. The money represented Workforce Investment Act Statewide Employment and Training funds in the amount of \$119, 720.

Pictured: Frankie Purdy, an employee at AFCO Manufacturing and one of the first trainees slated to use the new center looks over some of the equipment already in place at the facility.

**“I think this is a great program in that it will allow me to bring more knowledge to my job.”**

**Frankie Purdy**



“It has been the Consortium’s vision that has brought us here today,” said Commissioner Owens. “It is no surprise that Kentucky is ranked #5 in the nation by *Expansion Management* magazine as having one of the top industrial training programs for attracting and expanding existing industries. Your consortium is one of the reasons why Kentucky is seen as a top destination for businesses and industries.”

U.S. Congressman Ed Whitfield also addressed the crowd. “I’m enthusiastic about this training center because the key to creating jobs and bringing jobs to this area is a well-trained workforce,” he said. “The ability to bring jobs here will increase through the opportunities created by this center in which the mission is to provide that well-trained workforce.”



Commissioner Laura Owens



U.S. Congressman  
Ed Whitfield



Pictured from left: Consortium President Scott Laffoon of AFCO Manufacturing; State Rep. Mike Cherry; U.S. Congressman Ed Whitfield, Ricky Huntsman, Caldwell Co. Industrial Development Authority; Jim Greer, Vice-chairman, West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board; Alice Clark, Bremner Inc.; Commissioner Laura Owens, Department for Workforce Investment, Kentucky Education Cabinet; Craig Stallons, Special Metals Corporation; Director Sheila Clark, West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board; Van Knight, Caldwell County Judge Executive; and Martin Cecil, Bluegrass State Skills.

The training program was established, originally as a result of recommendations that came from a locally requested community economic development assessment report. The assessment, sponsored by the Cabinet for Economic Development and the Kentucky Industrial Development Council (KIDC) suggested the establishment of machine tool/industrial maintenance training. As a result, those industry, government and education segments of the community came together to form the Western Kentucky Industrial Training Consortium.

The consortium took the mission of identifying specific industry-training needs to develop cooperative programs to prepare entry-level employees for specific job requirements and provide skills upgrading for current employees through the training center.



Members of the consortium group include Scott Laffoon, AFCO Manufacturing; Alice Clark, Bremner, Inc.; Craig Stallons, Special Metals Corporation; Bob Friel, Truswal Inc.; Rickie Huntsman, Caldwell Co. Industrial Development Authority; Van Knight, Caldwell Co. Judge Executive; Arthur Dunn, principal of the Caldwell Co. ATC; Phil Rudolph, OCTE area supervisor, Emil Jezik, OCTE executive director; and Stan Carton, OCTE Business and Industry Branch supervisor.

Carton also served as primary writer of the Bluegrass State Skills Corporation Capacity Building grant application and the request for Workforce Investment Act Statewide Employment & Training funds.

"This project is a great example of what a community can do when everyone has a common goal and is willing to contribute money, people and time to make that goal a reality," said Carton.

Other funds for of the project came through various avenues including the Western Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, local government and the Caldwell Co. Board of Education, which actually donated the building.



Jim Greer, Vice-chairman, West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board



Pictured from left: Caldwell Co.  
ATC Principal Arthur Dunn  
and OCTE Area Supervisor  
Phil Rudolph

Principal Dunn will oversee day-to-day operations of the facility including maintenance and responsibility of equipment and teachers. All the equipment and teachers will come through or be paid for by the Ky Tech System. Future plans include secondary students having the opportunity to use the center for machine tool/industrial maintenance programs, which will be offered during regular school hours as part of their secondary educational opportunities.

“The facility itself has served as a wood/industrial education shop in the past and is perfect for this kind of program,” said Dunn.

The Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) played a significant role in obtaining equipment that is already at the building.

OCTE Executive Director Jezik provided the closing remarks for the ceremony saying “although we bring this gathering to a close today, this is only the beginning to what promises to be a great partnership created through the cooperation between local and state government, the Caldwell Co. ATC, the local school district and the manufacturing community.”

The new program’s curriculum will include: industrial electrical systems, industrial maintenance, electrical principles lab, industrial maintenance technology motor controls, industrial maintenance electrical motor controls lab, basic blue print reading, machine tool, fluid power, and welding maintenance.



Pictured on right: OCTE Executive Director Emil Jezik and Western Kentucky Industrial Training Consortium President Scott Laffoon.

